

PHILOSOPHIES ANCIENT AND MODERN

SCHOPENHAUER

## NOTE

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# SCHOPENHAUER

By

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# SCHOPENHAUER

## CHAPTER I

### LIFE AND WRITINGS

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER may be distinctively described as the greatest philosophic writer of his century. So evident is this that he has sometimes been regarded as having more importance in literature than in philosophy; but this is an error. As a metaphysician he is second to no one since Kant. Others of his age have surpassed him in system and in comprehensiveness; but no one has had a firmer grasp of the essential and fundamental problems of philosophy. On the theory of knowledge, the nature of reality, and the meaning of the beautiful and the good, he has solutions to offer that are all results of a characteristic and original way of thinking.

In one respect, as critics have noted, his spirit is different from that of European philosophy in general. What preoccupies him in a special way is the question of evil in the world. Like the

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philosophies of the East, emerging as they do without break from religion, Schopenhauer's philosophy is in its outcome a doctrine of redemption from sin. The name of pessimism commonly applied to it is in some respects misleading, though it was his own term; but it is correct if understood as he explained it. As he was accustomed to insist, his final ethical doctrine coincides with that of all the religions that aim, for their adepts or their elect, at deliverance from 'this evil world.' But, as the 'world-fleeing' religions have their mitigations and accommodations, so also has the philosophy of Schopenhauer. At various points indeed it seems as if a mere change of accent would turn it into optimism.

This preoccupation does not mean indifference to the theoretical problems of philosophy. No one has insisted more strongly that the end of philosophy is pure truth, and that only the few who care about pure truth have any concern with it. But for Schopenhauer the desire for speculative truth does not by itself suffice to explain the impulse of philosophical inquiries. On one side of his complex character, he had more resemblance to the men who turn from the world to religion, like St. Augustine, than to the normal type of European thinker, represented pre-emi-

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nently by Aristotle. He was a temperamental pessimist, feeling from the first the trouble of existence; and here he finds the deepest motive for the desire to become clear about it. He saw in the world, what he felt in himself, a vain effort after ever new objects of desire which give no permanent satisfaction ; and this view, becoming predominant, determined, not indeed all the ideas of his philosophy, but its general complexion as a ‘philosophy of redemption.’

With his pessimism, personal misfortunes had nothing to do. He was, and always recognised that he was, among the most fortunately placed of mankind. He does not hesitate to speak sometimes of his own happiness in complete freedom from the need to apply himself to any compulsory occupation. This freedom, as he has put gratefully on record, he owed to his father, Heinrich Floris Schopenhauer, who was a rich merchant of Danzig, where the philosopher was born on the 22nd of February 1788. Both his parents were of Dutch ancestry. His mother, Johanna Schopenhauer, won celebrity as a novelist; and his sister, Adele, also displayed some literary talent. Generalising from his own case, Schopenhauer holds that men of intelligence derive their character from their father and

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their intellect from their mother. With his mother, however, he was not on sympathetic terms, as may be read in the biographies. His father intended him for a mercantile career, and with this view began to prepare him from the first to be a cosmopolitan man of the world. The name of Arthur was given to him because it is spelt alike in the leading European languages. He was taken early to France, where he resided from 1797 to 1799, learning French so well that on his return he had almost forgotten his German. Portions of the years 1803 to 1804 were spent in England, France, Switzerland, and Austria. In England he was three months at a Wimbledon boarding-school kept by a clergyman. This experience he found extremely irksome. He afterwards became highly proficient in English: was always pleased to be taken for an Englishman, and regarded both the English character and intelligence as on the whole the first in Europe; but all the more deplorable did he find the oppressive pietism which was the special form taken in the England of that period by the reaction against the French Revolution. He is never tired of denouncing that phase of 'cold superstition,' the dominance of which lasted during his lifetime; for the publication of Mill's *Liberty* and of

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Darwin's *Origin of Species*, which may be considered as marking the close of it, came only the year before his death.

The only real break in the conformity of Schopenhauer's circumstances to his future career came in 1805, when he was placed in a merchant's office at Hamburg, whither his father had migrated in disgust at the annexation of his native Danzig, then under a republican constitution of its own, by Prussia in 1793. Soon afterwards his father died; but out of loyalty he tried for some time longer to reconcile himself to commercial life. Finding this at length impossible, he gained permission from his mother, in 1807, to leave the office for the gymnasium. At this time he seems to have begun his classical studies, his education having hitherto been exclusively modern. They were carried on first at Gotha and then at Weimar. In 1809 he entered the university of Göttingen as a student of medicine. This, however, was with a view only to scientific studies, not to practice; and he transferred himself to the philosophical faculty in 1810. Generally he was little regardful of academical authority. His father's deliberately adopted plan of letting him mix early with the world had given him a certain independence of

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judgment. At Göttingen, however, he received an important influence from his teacher, G. E. Schulze (known by the revived scepticism of his *Ænesidemus*), who advised him to study Plato and Kant before Aristotle and Spinoza. From 1811 to 1813 he was at Berlin, where he heard Fichte, but was not impressed. In 1813 the degree of Doctor of Philosophy was conferred on him at Jena for the dissertation *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* (*Ueber die vierfache Wurzel des Satzes vom zureichenden Grunde*, 2nd ed., 1847). This was the first result of his Kantian studies. In the same year he began to be acquainted with Goethe at Weimar, where his mother and sister had gone to reside in 1806. A consequence of this acquaintance was that he took up and further developed Goethe's theory of colours. His dissertation *Ueber das Sehen und die Farben* was published in 1816. A second edition did not appear till 1854; but in the meantime he had published a restatement of his doctrine in Latin, entitled *Theoria Colorum Physiologica* (1830). This, however, was an outlying part of his work. He had already been seized by the impulse to set forth the system of philosophy that took shape in him, as he says, by some formative

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process of which he could give no conscious account. His great work, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, was ready for publication before the end of 1818, and was published with the date 1819. Thus he is one of the most precocious philosophers on record. For in that single volume, written before he was thirty, the outlines of his whole system are fixed. There is some development later, and there are endless new applications and essays towards confirmation from all sources. His mind never rested, and his literary power gained by exercise. Still, it has been said with truth, that there never was a greater illusion than when he thought that he seldom repeated himself. In reality he did little but repeat his fundamental positions with infinite variations in expression.

After completing his chief work, Schopenhauer wrote some verses in which he predicted that posterity would erect a monument to him. This prediction was fulfilled in 1895; but, for the time, the work which he never doubted would be his enduring title to fame seemed, like Hume's *Treatise*, to have fallen 'deadborn from the press.' This he attributed to the hostility of the academical philosophers; and, in his later works, attacks on the university professors form a characteristic

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feature. The official teachers of the Hegelian school, he declared, were bent only on obtaining positions for themselves by an appearance of supporting Christian dogma; and they represented openness on the part of any one else. Yet on one side he maintained that his own pessimism was more truly Christian than their optimism. The essential spirit of Christianity is that of Brahmanism and Buddhism, the great religions that sprang from India, the first home of our race. He is even inclined to see in it traces of Indian influence. What vitiates it in his eyes is the Jewish element, which finds its expression in the flat modern 'Protestant-rationalist' optimism.' As optimistic religions, he groups together Judaism, Islam, and Graeco-Roman Polytheism. His antipathy, however, only extends to the two former. He was himself in great part a child of Humanism and of the eighteenth century, rejoicing over the approaching downfall of all the faiths, and holding that a weak religion (entirely different from those he admires) is favourable to civilisation. Nothing can exceed his scorn for nearly everything that characterised the Middle Ages. With Catholicism as a political system he has no sympathy whatever; while on the religious side the Pro-

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testant are as sympathetic to him as the Catholic mystics. What is common to all priesthoods, he holds, is to exploit the metaphysical need of mankind (in which he also believes) for the sake of their own power. Clericalism, ‘Pfaffenthum,’ whether Catholic or Protestant, is the object of his unvarying hatred and contempt. If he had cared to appreciate Hegel, he would have found on this point much community of spirit; but of course there was a real antithesis between the two as philosophers. No ‘conspiracy’ need be invoked to explain the failure of Schopenhauer to win early recognition. Belief in the State and in progress was quite alien to him; and Germany was then full of political hopes, which found nourishment in optimistic pantheism. What at length gave his philosophy vogue was the collapse of this enthusiasm on the failure of the revolutionary movement in 1848. Once known, it contained enough of permanent value to secure it from again passing out of sight with the next change of fashion.

The rest of Schopenhauer’s life in its external relations may be briefly summed up. For a few years, it was diversified by travels in Italy and elsewhere, and by an unsuccessful attempt at academical teaching in Berlin. In 1831 he

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moved to Frankfort, where he finally settled in 1833. He lived unmarried there till his death on the 21st of September 1860. The monument, already spoken of, was unveiled at Frankfort on the 6th of June 1895.

The almost unbroken silence with which his great work was received, though it had a dis tempering effect on the man, did not discourage the thinker. The whole series of Schopenhauer's works, indeed, was completed before he attained anything that could be called fame. Constantly on the alert as he was to seize upon confirmations of his system, he published in 1836 his short work *On the Will in Nature*, pointing out verifications of his metaphysics by recent science. In 1839 his prize essay, *On the Freedom of the Human Will* (finished in 1837), was crowned by the Royal Scientific Society of Drontheim in Norway. This and another essay, *On the Basis of Morality*, not crowned by the Royal Danish Society of Copenhagen in 1840, he published in 1841, with the inclusive title, *Die beiden Grundprobleme der Ethik*. In 1844 appeared the second edition of his principal work, to which there was added, in the form of a second volume, a series of elucidations and extensions larger in bulk than the first. This new volume contains much of

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his best and most effective writing. His last work, *Parerga und Paralipomena*, which appeared in 1851 (2 vols.), is from the literary point of view the most brilliant. It was only from this time that he began to be well known among the general public; though the philosophic 'apostolate' of Julius Frauenstädt, who afterwards edited his works, had begun in 1840. His activity was henceforth confined to modifying and extending his works for new editions; an employment in which he was always assiduous. In consequence of this, all of them, as they stand, contain references from one to another; but the development of his thinking, so far as there was such a process after 1818, can be easily traced without reference to the earlier editions. There is some growth; but, as has been said, it does not affect many of the chief points. A brief exposition of his philosophy can on the whole take it as something fixed. The heads under which it must fall are those assigned to the original four books of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*.

Although Schopenhauer discountenanced the attempt to connect a philosopher's biography with his work, something has to be said about his character, since this has been dwelt on to his disadvantage by opponents. There is abundant

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material for a personal estimate in the correspondence and reminiscences published after his death by his disciples Julius Frauenstädt and Wilhelm Gwinner. The apparent contradiction is at once obvious between the ascetic consummation of his ethics and his unascetic life, carefully occupied in its latter part with rules for the preservation of his naturally robust health. He was quite aware of this, but holds it absurd to require that a moralist should commend only the virtues which he possesses. It is as if the requirement were set up that a sculptor is to be himself a model of beauty. A saint need not be a philosopher, nor a philosopher a saint. The science of morals is as theoretical as any other branch of philosophy. Fundamentally character is unmodifiable, though knowledge, it is allowed, may change the mode of action within the limits of the particular character. The passage to the state of asceticism cannot be effected by moral philosophy, but depends on a kind of 'grace.' After all, it might be replied, philosophers, whether they succeed or not, do usually make at least an attempt to live in accordance with the moral ideal they set up. The best apology in Schopenhauer's case is that the fault may have been as much in his ideal as in his failure.

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to conform to it. The eloquent pages he has devoted to the subject of holiness only make manifest the inconsequence (which he admits) in the passage to it. For, as we shall see, this has nothing in common with the essentially rational asceticism of the schools of later antiquity; which was a rule of self-limitation in view of the philosophic life. He did in a way of his own practise something of this; and, on occasion, he sets forth the theory of it; but he quite clearly sees the difference. His own ideal, which he never attempted to practise, is that of the self-torturing ascetics of the Christian Middle Age. Within the range of properly human virtue, he can in many respects hold his own, not only as a philosopher but as a man. If his egoism and vanity are undeniably, he undoubtedly possessed the virtues of rectitude and compassion. What he would have especially laid stress on was the conscientious devotion to his work. With complete singleness of purpose he used for a disinterested end the leisure which he regarded as the most fortunate of endowments. As he said near the close of his life, his intellectual conscience was clear.

Of Schopenhauer's expositions of his pessimism it would be true to say, as Spinoza says of the Book of Job, that the matter, like the style, is not

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that of a man sitting among the ashes, but of one meditating in a library. This of course does not prove that they are not a genuine, if one-sided, rendering of human experience. All that can be said is that they did not turn him away from appreciation of the apparent goods of life. His own practical principle was furnished by what he regarded as a lower point of view; and this gives its direction to the semi-popular philosophy of the *Parerga*. From what he takes to be the higher point of view, the belief that happiness is attainable by man on earth is an illusion; but he holds that, by keeping steadily in view a kind of tempered happiness as the end, many mistakes may be avoided in the conduct of life, provided that each recognises at once the strength and weakness of his own character, and does not attempt things that, with the given limitations, are impossible. Of the highest truth, as he conceived it, he could therefore make no use. Only by means of a truth that he was bound to hold half-illusory could a working scheme be constructed for himself and others. This result may give us guidance in seeking to learn what we can from a thinker who is in reality no representative of a decadence, but is fundamentally sane and rational, even in spite of himself.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

THE title of Schopenhauer's chief work is rendered in the English translation, *The World as Will and Idea*. Here the term 'idea' is used in the sense it had for Locke and Berkeley; namely, any object of mental activity. Thus it includes not merely imagery, but also perception. Since Hume distinguished 'ideas' from 'impressions,' it has tended to be specialised in the former sense. The German word, *Vorstellung*, which it is used to render, conveys the generalised meaning of the Lockian 'idea,' now frequently expressed in English and French philosophical works by the more technical term 'presentation' or 'representation.' By Schopenhauer himself the word 'Idea' was used exclusively in the sense of the Platonic Idea, which, as we shall see, plays an important part in his philosophy. The distinction is preserved in the translation by the use of a capital when Idea has the latter meaning; but

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in a brief exposition it seems convenient to adopt a more technical rendering of *Vorstellung*; and, from its common employment in psychological text-books, I have selected 'presentation' as the most suitable.

The first proposition of Schopenhauer's philosophical system is, 'The world is my presentation.' By this he means that it presents itself as appearance to the knowing subject. This appearance is in the forms of time, space and causality. Under these forms every phenomenon necessarily appears, because they are *a priori* forms of the subject. The world as it presents itself consists entirely of phenomena, that is, appearances, related according to these forms. The most fundamental form of all is the relation between object and subject, which is implied in all of them. Without a subject there can be no presented object.

Schopenhauer is therefore an idealist in the sense in which we call Berkeley's theory of the external world idealism; though the expressions used are to some extent different. The difference proceeds from his following of Kant. His Kantianism consists in the recognition of *a priori* forms by which the subject constructs for itself an 'objective' world of appearances. With Berkeley

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he agrees as against Kant in not admitting any residue whatever, in the object as such, that is not wholly appearance. But while he allows that Berkeley, as regards the general formulation of idealism, was more consistent than Kant, he finds him, in working out the principle, altogether inadequate. For the modern mind there is henceforth no way in philosophy except through Kant, from whom dates the revolution by which scholastic dualism was finally overthrown. Kant's systematic construction, however, he in effect reduces to very little. His is a much simplified 'Apriorism.' While accepting the 'forms of sensible intuition,' that is, time and space, just as Kant sets them forth, he clears away nearly all the superimposed mechanism. Kant's 'Transcendental *Aesthetic*,' he says, was a real discovery in metaphysics; but on the basis of this he for the most part only gave free play to his architectonic impulse. Of the twelve 'categories of the understanding,' which he professed to derive from the logical forms of judgment, all except causality are mere 'blind windows.' This alone, therefore, Schopenhauer adopts; placing it, however, not at a higher level but side by side with time and space, Kant's forms of intuition. These three forms, according to Schopenhauer, make up the

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understanding of men and animals. ‘All intuition is intellectual.’ It is not first mere appearance related in space and time, and waiting for understanding to organise it; but, in animals as in man, it is put in order at once under the three forms that suffice to explain the knowledge all have of the phenomenal world.

To Reason as distinguished from Understanding, Schopenhauer assigns no such exalted function as was attributed to it in portions of his system by Kant, and still more by some of his successors. The name of ‘reason,’ he maintains, ought on etymological grounds to be restricted to the faculty of abstract concepts. This, and not understanding, is what distinguishes man from animals. It discovers and invents nothing, but it puts in a generalised and available form what the understanding has discovered in intuition.

For the historical estimation of Schopenhauer, it is necessary to place him in relation to Kant, as he himself always insisted. Much also in his chief work is made clearer by knowledge of his dissertation *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*, to which he is constantly referring. Later, his manner of exposition became more independent; so that he can be read by the general reader with profit simply by himself, and

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without reference to antecedents. Still, it will always be advisable for an expositor to follow his directions, at least to the extent of giving some short account of the dissertation. This I proceed to give approximately in the place to which he has assigned it in his system.

The name of the principle (*principium rationis sufficientis*) he took over from Leibniz and his successor Wolff, but gave it a new amplitude. With him, it stands as an inclusive term for four modes of connection by which the thoroughgoing relativity of phenomena to one another is constituted for our intelligence. The general statement adopted is, ‘Nothing is without a reason why it should be rather than not be.’ Its four forms are the principles of becoming (*fiendi*), of knowing (*cognoscendi*), of being (*essendi*), and of acting (*agendi*). (1) Under the first head come ‘causes.’ These are divided into ‘cause proper,’ for inorganic things; ‘stimulus,’ for the vegetative life both of plants and animals; and ‘motive,’ for animals and men. The law of causation is applicable only to changes; not to the forces of nature, to matter, or to the world as a whole, which are perdurable. Cause precedes effect in time. Not one thing, but one state of a thing, is the cause of another. From the law of

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causation there results an infinite series *a parte ante* as well as *a parte post*. (2) The principle of sufficient reason of knowing is applicable to concepts, which are all derived from intuition, that is, from percepts. The laws of logic, which come under this head, can yield nothing original, but can only render explicit what was in the understanding. (3) Under the third head come arithmetical and geometrical relations. These are peculiar relations of presentations, distinct from all others, and only intelligible in virtue of a pure *a priori* intuition. For geometry this is space; for arithmetic time, in which counting goes on. Scientifically, arithmetic is fundamental. (4) As the third form of causality was enumerated 'motive' for the will; but in that classification it was viewed from without, as belonging to the world of objects. Through the direct knowledge we have of our own will, we know also from within this determination by the presentation we call a motive. Hence emerges the fourth form of the principle of sufficient reason. This at a later stage makes possible the transition from physics to metaphysics.

All these forms alike are forms of necessary determination. Necessity has no clear and true sense but certainty of the consequence when the

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ground is posited. All necessity therefore is conditional. In accordance with the four expressions of the principle of sufficient reason, it takes the fourfold shape of physical, logical, mathematical, and moral necessity.

The sharp distinction between logical and mathematical truth, with the assignment of the former to conceptual and of the latter to intuitive relations, comes to Schopenhauer directly from Kant. So also does his view that the necessary form of causation is sequence; though here his points of contact with English thinkers, earlier and later, are very marked. Only in his statement of the 'law of motivation' as 'causality seen from within' does he hint at his own distinctive metaphysical doctrine. Meanwhile, it is evident that he is to be numbered with the group of modern thinkers who have arrived in one way or another at a complete scientific phenomenism. Expositors have noted that in his earlier statements of this he tends to lay more stress on the character of the visible and tangible world as mere appearance. The impermanence, the relativity, of all that exists in time and space, leads him to describe it, in a favourite term borrowed from Indian philosophy, as *Maya*, or illusion. Later, he dwells more on the relative

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reality of things as they appear. His position, however, does not essentially alter, but only finds varying expression as he turns more to the scientific or to the metaphysical side. From Hume's view on causation he differs not by opposing its pure phenomenism, but only by recognising, as Kant does, an *a priori* element in the form of its law. German critics have seen in his own formulation an anticipation of Mill, and this is certainly striking as regards the general conception of the causal order, although there is no anticipation of Mill's inductive logic. On the same side there is a close agreement with Malebranche and the Occasionalists, pointed out by Schopenhauer himself. The causal explanations of science, he is at one with them in insisting, give no ultimate account of anything. All its causes are no more than 'occasional causes,'—merely instances, as Mill expressed it afterwards, of 'invariable and unconditional sequence.' From Mill of course he differs in holding its form to be necessary and *a priori*, not ultimately derived from a summation of experiences; and, with the Occasionalists, he goes on to metaphysics in its sense of ontology, as Mill never did. The difference here is that he does not clothe his metaphysics in a theological dress.

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In the later development of his thought, Schopenhauer dealt more expressly with the question, how this kind of phenomenism is reconcilable with a scientific cosmogony. On one side the proposition, 'No object without subject,' makes materialism for ever impossible; for the materialist tries to explain from relations among presentations what is the condition of all presentation. On the other side, we are all compelled to agree with the materialists that knowledge of the object comes late in a long series of material events. Inorganic things existed in time before life; vegetative life before animal life; and only with animal life does knowledge emerge. Reasoned knowledge of the whole series comes only at the end of it in the human mind. This apparent contradiction he solves by leaving a place for metaphysics. Our representation of the world as it existed before the appearance of life was indeed non-existent at the time to which we assign it; but the real being of the world had a manifestation not imaginable by us. For this, we substitute a picture of a world such as we should have been aware of had our 'subject,' with its *a priori* forms of time, space, and causality, been then present. What the reality is, is the problem of the thing-in-itself (to use the Kantian

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term). This problem remains over; but we know that the metaphysical reality cannot be matter; for matter, with all its qualities, is phenomenal. It exists only 'for understanding, through understanding, in understanding.' These discriminations made, Schopenhauer offers us a scientific cosmogony beginning with the nebular hypothesis and ending with an outline of organic evolution. This last differs from the Darwinian theory in supposing a production of species by definite steps instead of by accumulation of small individual variations. At a certain time, a form that has all the characters of a new species appears among the progeny of an existing species. Man is the last and highest form to be evolved. From Schopenhauer's metaphysics, as we shall see, it follows that no higher form of life will ever appear.

A word may be said here on a materialistic-sounding phrase which is very prominent in Schopenhauer's later expositions, and has been remarked on as paradoxical for an idealist. The world as presentation, he often says, is 'in the brain.' This, it must be allowed, is not fully defensible from his own point of view, except with the aid of a later distinction. The brain as we know it is of course only a part of the

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phenomenon of the subject,—a grouping of possible perceptions. How then, since it is itself only appearance, can it be the bearer of the whole universe as appearance? The answer is that Schopenhauer meant in reality ‘the being of the brain,’ and not the brain as phenomenon. He had a growing sense of the importance of physiology for the investigation of mind; and his predilection led him to adopt a not quite satisfactory shorthand expression for the correspondence we know scientifically to exist between our mental processes and changes capable of objective investigation in the matter of the brain.

In science his distinctive bent was to the borderland between psychology and physiology. Hence came the attraction exercised on him by Goethe’s theory of colours. To his own theory, though, unlike his philosophical system, it has always failed to gain the attention he predicted for it, the merit must be allowed of treating the problem as essentially one of psychophysics. What he does is to attempt to ascertain the conditions in the sensibility of the retina that account for our actual colour-sensations. This problem was untouched by the Newtonian theory; but Schopenhauer followed Goethe in

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the error of trying to overthrow this on its own ground. He had no aptitude for the special inquiries of mathematics and physics, though he had gained a clear insight into their general nature as sciences. On the psycho-physical side there is to-day no fully authorised theory. The problem indeed has become ever more complex. Schopenhauer's attempt, by combination of sensibilities to 'light' and 'darkness,' to explain the phenomena of complementary colours, deserves at least a record in the long series of essays of which the best known are the 'Young-Helmholtz theory' and that of Hering. It marks an indubitable advance on Goethe in the clear distinction drawn between the mixture, in the ordinary sense, that can only result in dilution to different shades of grey, and the kinds of mixture from which, in their view, true colours arise.

A characteristic position in Schopenhauer's theory of knowledge, and one that is constantly finding new expression in his writings, is the distinction between abstract and intuitive knowledge already touched on. Intuitive knowledge of the kind that is common to men and animals, as we have seen, makes up, in his terminology, the 'understanding'; while 'reason' is the distinctively human faculty of concepts. When he

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depreciates this, as he often does, in comparison with ‘intuition,’ it must be remembered that he does not limit this term to perception of particulars, but ascribes to what he calls the ‘Platonic Idea’ a certain kind of union between reason and ‘phantasy,’ which gives it an intuitive character of its own. Thus intuition can stand, though not in every case for what is higher, yet always for that which is wider and greater and more immediate. Whatever may be done with reflective reason and its abstractions, every effectual process of thought must end, alike for knowledge and art and virtue, in some intuitive presentation. The importance of reason for practice is due to its generality. Its function is subordinate. It does not furnish the ground of virtuous action any more than æsthetic precepts can enable any one to produce a work of art; but it can help to preserve constancy to certain maxims, as also in art a reasoned plan is necessary because the inspiration of genius is not every moment at command. Virtue and artistic genius alike, however, depend ultimately on intuition: and so also does every true discovery in science. The nature of pedantry is to try to be guided everywhere by concepts, and to trust nothing to perception in the particular case. Philosophy

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also Schopenhauer regards as depending ultimately on a certain intuitive view; but he allows that it has to translate this into abstractions. Its problem is to express the *what* of the world in abstract form: science dealing only with the *why* of phenomena related within the world. This character of philosophy as a system of abstract concepts deprives it of the immediate attractiveness of art; so that, as he says in one place, it is more fortunate to be a poet than a philosopher.

## CHAPTER III

### METAPHYSICS OF THE WILL

WE have seen that scientific explanation does not go beyond presentations ordered in space and time. This is just as true of the sciences of causation—the ‘aetiological’ sciences—as it is of mathematical science. All that we learn from Mechanics, Physics, Chemistry and Physiology, is ‘how, in accordance with an infallible rule, one determinate state of matter necessarily follows another: how a determinate change necessarily conditions and brings on another determinate change.’ This knowledge does not satisfy us. We wish to learn the significance of phenomena; but we find that from outside, while we view them as presentations, their inner meaning is for ever inaccessible.

The starting-point for the metaphysical knowledge we seek is given us in our own body. The animal body is ‘the immediate object of the subject’: in it as presentation the ‘effects’ of

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'causes' in the order of presentations external to it are first recognised. Now in virtue of his body the investigator is not pure knowing subject standing apart from that which he knows. In the case of the particular system of presentations constituting his organism, he knows what these presentations signify, and that is his *will* in a certain modification. The subject appears as individual through its identity with the body, and this body is given to it in two different ways: on one side as object among objects, and subjected to their laws; on the other side as the will immediately known to each. The act of will and the movement of the body are not two different states related as cause and effect; for the relation of cause and effect belongs only to the object, the phenomenon, the presentation. They are one and the same act given in different manners: the will, immediately to the subject; the movement, in sensible intuition for understanding. The action of the body is the objectified act of will. Called at first the immediate object of presentation, the body may now, from the other side, be called 'the objectivity of the will.'

Thus, as was said, the 'law of motivation' discloses the inner nature of causality. In

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causality in general we know only relations of phenomena; but in the case of our own body we know something else that those relations express; namely, the act of will determined by motives. Now there are in the world as presentation other systems like that which we call our body. Unless all these are to be supposed mere phantoms without inner reality, we must infer by analogy, in correspondence with like phenomena, other individual wills similar to that which we know in ourselves. This inference from analogy, universally admitted in the case of human and animal bodies, must be extended to the whole corporeal world. The failure to take this step is where the purely intellectual forms of idealism have come short. Kant's 'thing-in-itself,' which is not subject to the forms by which presentations become experience, but which experience and its forms indicate as the reality, has been wrongly condemned by his successors as alien to idealism. It is true that Kant did in some respects fail to maintain the idealistic position with the clearness of Berkeley; but his shortcoming was not in affirming a thing-in-itself beyond phenomena. Here, in Schopenhauer's view, is the metaphysical problem that he left a place for but did not solve. The word of the riddle has now been pronounced.

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Beyond presentation, that is, in itself and according to its innermost essence, the world is that which we find in ourselves immediately as will. By this it is not meant that a falling stone, for example, acts from a motive ; knowledge and the consequent action from motives belongs only to the determinate form that the will has in animals and men ; but the reality in the stone also is the same in essence as that to which we apply the name of will in ourselves. He who possesses this key to the knowledge of nature's innermost being will interpret the forces of vegetation, of crystallisation, of magnetism, of chemical affinity, even of weight itself, as different only in phenomenal manifestation but in essence the same ; namely, that which is better known to each than all else, and where it emerges most clearly is called will. Only the will is thing-in-itself. It is wholly different from presentation, and is that of which presentation is the phenomenon, the visibility, the objectivity. Differences affect only the degree of the appearing, not the essence of that which appears.

While the reality everywhere present is not will as specifically known in man, the mode of indicating its essence by reference to this, Schopenhauer contends, is a gain in insight. The

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thing-in-itself ought to receive its name from that among all its manifestations which is the clearest, the most perfect, the most immediately illumined by knowledge; and this is man's will. When we say that every force in nature is to be thought of as Will, we are subsuming an unknown under a known. For the conception of Force is abstracted from the realm of cause and effect, and indicates the limit of scientific explanation. Having arrived at the forces of nature on the one side and the forms of the subject on the other, science can go no further. The conception of Will can make known that which was so far concealed, because it proceeds from the most intimate consciousness that each has of himself, where the knower and the known coincide.

By this consciousness, in which subject and object are not yet set apart, we reach something universal. In itself the Will is not individualised, but exists whole and undivided in every single thing in nature, as the Subject of contemplation exists whole and undivided in each cognitive being. It is entirely free from all forms of the phenomenon. What makes plurality possible is subjection to the forms of time and space, by which only the phenomenon is affected. Time and space may therefore be called, in scholastic

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terminology, the ‘principle of individuation.’ While each of its phenomena is subject to the law of sufficient reason, which is the law of appearance in these forms, there is for the Will as thing-in-itself no rational ground: it is ‘grundlos.’ It is free from all plurality, although its phenomena in space and time are innumerable. It is one, not with the unity of an object or of a concept, but as that which lies outside of space and time, beyond the *principium individuationis*, that is, the possibility of plurality. The individual, the person, is not will as thing-in-itself, but phenomenon of the will, and as such determined. The will is ‘free’ because there is nothing beyond itself to determine it. Further, it is in itself mere activity without end, a blind striving. Knowledge appears only as the accompaniment of its ascending stages.

Here we have arrived at the thought which, in its various expressions, constitutes Schopenhauer’s metaphysics. That this cannot be scientifically deduced he admits; but he regards it as furnishing such explanation as is possible of science itself. For science there is in everything an inexplicable element to which it runs back, and which is real, not merely phenomenal. From this reality we are most remote in pure mathe-

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matics and in the pure *a priori* science of nature as it was formulated by Kant. These owe their transparent clearness precisely to their absence of real content, or to the slightness of this. The attempt to reduce organic life to chemistry, this again to mechanism, and at last everything to arithmetic, could it succeed, would leave mere form behind, from which all the content of phenomena would have vanished. And the form would in the end be form of the subject. But the enterprise is vain. ‘For in everything in nature there is something of which no ground can ever be given, of which no explanation is possible, no cause further is to be sought.’ What for man is his inexplicable character, presupposed in every explanation of his deeds from motives, that for every inorganic body is its inexplicable quality, the manner of its acting.

The basis of this too is will, and ‘groundless,’ inexplicable will; but evidently the conception here is not identical with that of the Will that is one and all. How do we pass from the universal to that which has a particular character or quality? For of the Will as thing-in-itself we are told that there is not a greater portion in a man and a less in a stone. The relation of part and whole belongs exclusively to space. The more

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and less touches only the phenomenon, that is, the visibility, the objectivation. A higher degree of this is in the plant than in the stone, in the animal than in the plant, and so forth; but the Will that is the essence of all is untouched by degree, as it is beyond plurality, space and time, and the relation of cause and effect.

The answer to the question here raised is given in Schopenhauer's interpretation of the Platonic Ideas. These he regards as stages of objectivation of the Will. They are, as Plato called them, eternal forms related to particular things as models. The lowest stage of objectivation of the Will is represented by the forces of inorganic nature. Some of these, such as weight and impenetrability, appear in all matter. Some are divided among its different kinds, as rigidity, fluidity, elasticity, electricity, magnetism, chemical properties. They are not subject to the relation of cause and effect, but are presupposed by it. A force is neither cause of an effect nor effect of a cause. Philosophically, it is immediate objectivity of the will; in *aetiology*, *qualitas occulta*. At the lowest stages of objectivation, there is no individuality. This does not appear in inorganic things, nor even in merely organic or vegetative life, but only as we ascend the scale

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of animals. Even in the higher animals the specific enormously predominates over the individual character. Only in man is the Idea objectified in the individual character as such. 'The character of each individual man, so far as it is thoroughly individual and not entirely comprehended in that of the species, may be regarded as a particular Idea, corresponding to a peculiar act of objectivation of the Will.'

Schopenhauer warns us against substituting this philosophical explanation for scientific aetiology. The chain of causes and effects, he points out, is not broken by the differences of the original, irreducible forces. The aetiology and the philosophy of nature go side by side, regarding the same object from different points of view. Yet he also gives us in relation to his philosophy much that is not unsuggestive scientifically. His doctrine is not properly evolutionary, since the Ideas are eternal; but he has guarded incidentally against our supposing that all the natural kinds that manifest the Ideas phenomenally must be always represented in every world. For our particular world, comprising the sun and planets of the solar system, he sets forth in the *Parerga* an account of the process by which it develops from the nebula to man. This was

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referred to in the preceding chapter. In his fundamental work he describes a struggle, present through the whole of nature, in which the phenomenal manifestations of the higher Ideas conquer and subjugate those of the lower, though they leave them still existent and ever striving to get loose. Here has been seen an adumbration of natural selection: he himself admits the difficulty he has in making it clear. We must remember that it is pre-Darwinian.

Knowledge or intelligence he seeks to explain as an aid to the individual organism in its struggle to subsist and to propagate its kind. It first appears in animal life. It is represented by the brain or a large ganglion, as every endeavour of the Will in its self-objectivation is represented by some organ; that is, displays itself for presentation as such and such an appearance. Superinduced along with this contrivance for aid in the struggle, the world as presentation, with all its forms, subject and object, time, space, plurality and causality, is all at once there. ‘Hitherto only will, it is now at the same time presentation, object of the knowing subject.’ Then in man, as a higher power beyond merely intuitive intelligence, appears reason as the power of abstract conception. For the most part

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rational as well as intuitive knowledge, evolved originally as a mere means to higher objectivation of the Will, remains wholly in its service. How, in exceptional cases, intellect emancipates itself, will be discussed under the heads of *Aesthetics* and *Ethics*.

That this view implies a teleology Schopenhauer expressly recognises. Indeed he is a very decided teleologist on lines of his own, and, in physiology, takes sides strongly with 'vitalism' as against pure mechanicism. True, the Will is 'endless' blind striving, and is essentially divided against itself. Everywhere in nature there is strife, and this takes the most horrible forms. Yet somehow there is in each individual manifestation of will a principle by which first the organism with its vital processes, and then the portion of it called the brain, in which is represented the intellect with its *a priori* forms, are evolved as aids in the strife. And, adapting all the manifestations to one another, there is a teleology of the universe. The whole world, with all its phenomena, is the objectivity of the one and indivisible Will; the Idea which is related to all other Ideas as the harmony to the single voices. The unity of the Will shows itself in the unison of all its phenomena as related to one

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another. Man, its clearest and completest objectivation, is the summit of a pyramid, and could not exist without this. Inorganic and organic nature, then, were adapted to the future appearance of man, as man is adapted to the development that preceded him. But in thinking the reality, time is to be abstracted from. The earlier, we are obliged to say, is fitted to the later, as the later is fitted to the earlier; but the relation of means to end, under which we cannot help figuring the adaptation, is only appearance for our manner of knowledge. And the harmony described does not get rid of the conflict inherent in all will.

In this account of Schopenhauer's metaphysical doctrine, I have tried to make the exposition as smooth as possible; but at two points the discontinuity can scarcely be concealed. First, the relation of the universal Will to the individual will is not made clear; and, secondly, the emergence of the world of presentation, with the knowledge in which it culminates, is left unintelligible because the will is conceived as mere blind striving without an aim. As regards the first point, disciples and expositors have been able to show that, by means of distinctions in his later writings, apparent contradictions are to some

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extent cleared away; and, moreover, that he came to recognise more reality in the individual will. On the second point, I think it will be necessary to admit that his system as such breaks down. But both points must be considered in their connection.

One of the most noteworthy features of Schopenhauer's philosophy is, as he himself thought, the acceptance from first to last of Kant's distinction between the 'empirical' and the 'intelligible' character of the individual. Every act of will of every human being follows with necessity as phenomenon from its phenomenal causes; so that all the events of each person's life are determined in accordance with scientific law. Nevertheless, the character empirically manifested in the phenomenal world, while it is completely necessitated, is the expression of something that is free from necessitation. This 'intelligible character' is out of time, and, itself undetermined, manifests itself through that which develops in time as a chain of necessary causes and effects. That this doctrine had been taken up, without any ambiguity as regards the determinism, by Schelling as well as by himself, he expressly acknowledges; and he finds it, as he also finds modern idealism, anticipated in various passages

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by the Neo-Platonists. His adaptation of it to his doctrine of the Ideas is distinctly Neo-Platonic in so far as he recognises ‘Ideas of individuals’; but of course to make Will the essence belongs to his own system. ‘The intelligible character,’ he says, ‘coincides with the Idea, or, yet more precisely, with the original act of will that manifests itself in it: in so far, not only is the empirical character of each man, but also of each animal species, nay, of each plant species, and even of each original force of inorganic nature, to be regarded as phenomenon of an intelligible character, that is, of an indivisible act of will out of time.’ This is what he called the ‘*ascitas*’ of the will; borrowing a scholastic term to indicate its derivation (if we may speak of it as derived) from itself (*a se*), and not from a supposed creative act. Only if we adopt this view are we entitled to regard actions as worthy of moral approval or disapproval. They are such not because they are not necessitated, but because they necessarily show forth the nature of an essence the freedom of which consists in being what it is. Yet he could not but find a difficulty in reconciling this with his position that the one universal Will is identical in all things, and in each is ‘individuated’ only by space and time. For the Ideas, like the

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thing-in-itself, are eternal, that is, outside of time as well as space; and all the things now enumerated, forces of nature, plant and animal species, and individual characters of men, are declared to be in themselves Ideas.

He in part meets this difficulty by the subtlety that time and space do not, strictly speaking, determine individuality, but arise along with it. The diremption of individualities becomes explicit in those forms. Yet he must have perceived that this is not a complete answer, and various modifications can be seen going on. His first view clearly was that the individual is wholly impermanent, and at death simply disappears; nothing is left but the one Will and the universal Subject of contemplation identical in all. Metempsychosis is the best mythological rendering of what happens, but it is no more. Later, he puts forward the not very clearly defined theory of a 'palingenesia' by which a particular will, but not the intellect that formerly accompanied it, may reappear in the phenomenal world. And the hospitality he showed to stories of magic, clairvoyance, and ghost-seeing, is scarcely compatible with the view that the individual will is no more than a phenomenal differentiation of the universal will. A speculation (not put forward as anything more)

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on the appearance of a special providence in the destiny of the individual, points, as Professor Volkelt has noted, to the idea of a guidance, not from without, but by a kind of good daemon or genius that is the ultimate reality of the person. On all this we must not lay too much stress; but there is certainly one passage that can only be described as a definite concession that the individual is real in a sense not at first allowed. Individuality, it is said in so many words (*Parerga*, ii. § 117), does not rest only on the 'principle of individuation' (time and space), and is therefore not through and through phenomenon, but is rooted in the thing-in-itself. 'How deep its roots go belongs to the questions which I do not undertake to answer.'<sup>1</sup>

This tends to modify considerably, but does not overthrow, Schopenhauer's original system. In very general terms, he is in the number of the 'pantheistic' thinkers; and it is remarkable, on examination, how these, in Europe at least, have nearly always recognised in the end some permanent reality in the individual. This is contrary to first impressions: but the great names may be cited of Plotinus, John Scotus Erigena, Giordano Bruno, Spinoza (in Part v. of the *Ethics*),

<sup>1</sup> *Werke*, ed. Frauenstädt, vol. vi. p. 243.

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and finally of Schopenhauer's special aversion, Hegel, who has been supposed most unfavourable of all to any recognition of individuality as real. It is more true, Hegel maintains, that the individuality determines its world than that it is determined by it; and there is no explanation why the determination should be such and such except that the individuality was already what it is.<sup>1</sup> And, if Schopenhauer's more imaginative speculations seek countenance from the side of empiricism, there is nothing in them quite so audacious as a speculation of J. S. Mill on disembodied mind, thrown out during the time when he was writing his *Logic*.<sup>2</sup>

The association with pantheism Schopenhauer accepts in principle, though the name is not congenial to him. In his system the Will is one and all, like the 'Deus' of Spinoza. The difference is that, instead of ascribing perfection to the universe that is its manifestation, he regards the

<sup>1</sup> *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Jubiläumsausgabe, ed. G. Lasson, pp. 201-3.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Robert Barclay Fox, May 10, 1842. Printed in Appendix to *Letters and Journals of Caroline Fox*, third ed., vol. ii. pp. 331-2. 'To suppose that the eye is *necessary* to sight,' says Mill, 'seems to me the notion of one immersed in matter. What we call our bodily sensations are all in the mind, and would not necessarily or probably cease, because the body perishes.'

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production of a world as a lapse from which redemption is to be sought. His doctrine has been rightly described, in common with the predominant philosophical doctrines of his period, as a resultant of the deepened subjective analysis brought by Kant into modern philosophy on the one side, and of the return to Spinoza in the quest for unity of principle on the other. Why, then, it may be asked, are Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel the constant objects of his attack? The true explanation is not the merely external one, that they were his successful rivals for public favour, but is to be found in a real antithesis of thought. Within the limits of the idealism they all hold in common, Schopenhauer is at the opposite pole. In spite of his attempt to incorporate the Platonic Ideas, and in spite of his following of Kant, whose 'intelligible world' was in essence Platonic or neo-Platonic, he could find no place in his system for a rational order at the summit. Now this order was precisely what Fichte and Hegel aimed at demonstrating. If Schopenhauer is less unsympathetic in his references to Schelling, that is because Schelling's world-soul appeared to him to prefigure his own attempt to discover in nature the manifestation of a blindly striving will or feeling rather than

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reason. Suspicious as he shows himself of possible plagiarisms by others, the charge cannot be retorted against himself. The supreme principle of Fichte, it has been pointed out, has an actively volitional character and was formulated before Schopenhauer's: but then it is essentially rational. For Hegel, what is supreme is the world-reason. Hence they are at one with Plato in holding that in some sense 'mind is king.' For Schopenhauer, on the contrary, mind, or pure intellect, is an emancipated slave. Having reached its highest point, and seen through the work of the will, it does not turn back and organise it, but abolishes it as far as its insight extends.

Yet to say merely this is to give a wrong impression of Schopenhauer. Starting though he does with blind will, and ending with the flight of the ascetic from the suffering inherent in the world that is the manifestation of such a will, he nevertheless, in the intermediate stages, makes the world a cosmos and not a chaos. And the Platonists on their side have to admit that 'the world of all of us' does not present itself on the surface as a manifestation of pure reason, and that it is a serious task to 'rationalise' it. Where he completely fails is where the Platonic systems

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also fail, though from the opposite starting-point. His attempt to derive presentation, intellect, knowledge, from blind striving, is undoubtedly a failure. But so also is the attempt of the Platonising thinkers to deduce a world of mixture from a principle of pure reason without aid from anything else empirically assumed. Not that in either case there is failure to give explanations in detail; but in both cases much is taken from experience without reduction to the principles of the system. What we may say by way of comparison is this: that if Schopenhauer had in so many words recognised an immanent Reason as well as Will in the reality of the universe, he would have formally renounced his pessimism; while it cannot be said that on the other side a more explicit empiricism in the account of the self-manifestation of Reason would necessarily destroy the optimism.

## CHAPTER IV

### AESTHETICS

A PORTION of Schopenhauer's system by which its pessimism is considerably mitigated is his theory of the Beautiful and of Fine Art. The characteristic of æsthetic contemplation is, he finds, that intellect throws off the yoke and subsists purely for itself as clear mirror of the world, free from all subjection to practical purposes of the will. In this state of freedom, temporary painlessness is attained.

The theory starts from his adaptation of the Platonic Ideas. Regarded purely as an æsthetic theory, it departs from Plato, as he notes; for, with the later Platonists, who took up the defence of poetic myths and of the imitative arts as against their master, he holds that Art penetrates to the general Idea through the particular, and hence that the work of art is no mere 'copy of a copy.' The difference of the Idea from the Concept is that it is not merely abstract and

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general, but combines with generality the characters of an intuition.

The Ideas, as we have seen, constitute the determinate stages of objectivation of the Will. The innumerable individuals of which the Ideas are the patterns are subject to the law of sufficient reason. They appear, that is to say, under the forms of time, space, and causality. The Idea is beyond these forms, and therefore is clear of plurality and change. Since the law of sufficient reason is the common form under which stands all the subject's knowledge so far as the subject knows as individual, the Ideas lie outside the sphere of knowledge of the individual as such. If, therefore, the Ideas are to be the object of knowledge, this can only be by annulling individuality in the knowing subject.

As thing-in-itself, the Will is exempt even from the first of the forms of knowledge, the form of being 'object for a subject.' The Platonic Idea, on the other hand, is necessarily an object, something known, a presentation. It has laid aside, or rather has not taken on, the subordinate forms; but it has retained the first and most general form. It is the immediate and most adequate possible objectivity of the Will; whereas particular things are an objectivation troubled by

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the forms of which the law of sufficient reason is the common expression.

When intellect breaks loose from the service of the will, for which it was originally destined in the teleology of nature, then the subject ceases to be merely individual and becomes pure will-less subject of knowledge. In this state the beholder no longer tracks out relations in accordance with the principle of sufficient reason—which is the mode of scientific as well as of common knowledge—but rests in fixed contemplation of the given object apart from its connection with anything else. The contemplator thus ‘lost’ in the object, it is not the single thing as such that is known, but the Idea, the eternal form, the immediate objectivity of the Will at this stage. The correlate of this object—the pure Subject exempt from the principle of sufficient reason—is eternal, like the Idea.

The objectivation of the Will appears faintly in inorganic things,—clouds, water, crystals,—more fully in the plant, yet more fully in the animal, most completely in man. Only the essential in these stages of objectivation constitutes the Idea. Its development into manifold phenomena under the forms of the principle of sufficient reason, is unessential, lies merely in the mode of knowledge

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for the individual, and has reality only for this. It is not otherwise with the unfolding of that Idea which is the completest objectivation of the Will. To the Idea of Man, the occurrences of human history are as unessential as the shapes they assume to the clouds, as the figures of its whirlpools and foam-drift to the stream, as its frost-flowers to the ice. The same underlying passions and dispositions everlastingly recur in the same modes. It is idle to suppose that anything is gained. But also nothing is lost: so the Earth-spirit might reply to one who complained of high endeavours frustrated, faculties wasted, promises of world-enlightenment brought to nought; for there is infinite time to dispose of, and all possibilities are for ever renewed.

The kind of knowledge for which the Ideas are the object of contemplation finds its expression in Art, the work of genius. Art repeats in its various media the Ideas grasped by pure contemplation. Its only end is the communication of these. While Science, following the stream of events according to their determinate relations, never reaches an ultimate end, Art is always at the end. ‘It stops the wheel of time; relations vanish for it: only the essence, the Idea, is its object.’ The characteristic of genius is a pre-

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dominant capacity for thus contemplating things independently of the principle of sufficient reason. Since this requires a forgetting of one's own person and the relations between it and things, the attitude of genius is simply the completest 'objectivity.' The 'subjectivity' opposed to this, in Schopenhauer's phraseology, is preoccupation with the interests of one's own will. It is, he says, as if there fell to the share of genius a measure of intelligence far beyond the needs of the individual will: and this makes possible the setting aside of individual interests, the stripping off of the particular personality, so that the subject becomes 'pure knowing subject,' 'clear world-eye,' in a manner sufficiently sustained for that which has been grasped to be repeated in the work of art. A necessary element in genius is therefore Imagination. For without imagination to represent, in a shape not merely abstract, things that have not come within personal experience, genius would remain limited to immediate intuition, and could not make its vision apprehensible by others. Nor without imagination could the particular things that express the Idea be cleared of the imperfections by which their limited expression of it falls short of what nature was aiming at in their production. 'Inspiration' is ascribed to

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genius because its characteristic attitude is intermittent. The man of genius cannot always remain on a height, but has to fall back to the level of the common man, who can scarcely at all regard things except as they affect his interests,—have a relation to his will, direct or indirect.

This is the statement in its first outline of a theory that became one of Schopenhauer's most fruitful topics. Many are the pages he has devoted to the contrast between the man of genius and 'the wholesale ware of nature, which she turns out daily by thousands.' The genius is for him primarily the artist. Scientific genius as a distinctive thing he does not fully recognise; and he regards men of action, and especially statesmen, rather as men of highly competent ability endowed with an exceptionally good physical constitution than as men of genius in the proper sense. Philosophers like himself, who, as he frankly says, appear about once in a hundred years, he classes in the end with the artists; though this was left somewhat indeterminate in his first exposition. The weakness of the man of genius in dealing with the ordinary circumstances of life he allows, and even insists on. Genius, grasping the Idea in its perfection, fails to understand individuals. A poet may know man pro-

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foundly, and men very ill. He admits the proximity of genius to madness on one side, and explains it in this way. What marks the stage of actual madness, as distinguished from illusion or hallucination, is complete disruption of the memory of past life, of the history of the personality as something continuous; so that the particular thing is viewed by itself, out of relation. This gives a kind of resemblance to the attitude of genius, for which present intuition excludes from view the relations of things to each other. Or, as we may perhaps sum up his thought in its most general form, 'alienation' or dissolution of personality has the resemblance often noted between extremes to the impersonality, or, as he calls it, 'objectivity,' that is super-personal.

In spite of his contempt for the crowd, he has to admit, of course, that the capacity of genius to recognise the Ideas of things and to become momentarily impersonal must in some measure belong to all men; otherwise, they could not even enjoy a work of art when produced. Genius has the advantage only in the much higher degree and the greater prolongation of the insight. Since, then, the actual achievement of the artist is to make us look into the world through his eyes, the feelings for the beautiful and the sublime

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may be treated irrespectively of the question whether they are aroused by nature and human life directly or by means of art.

Æsthetic pleasure in contemplation of the beautiful proceeds partly from recognition of the individual object not as one particular thing but as Platonic Idea, that is, as the enduring form of this whole kind of things; partly from the consciousness the knower has of himself not as individual, but as pure, will-less Subject of Knowledge. All volition springs out of need, therefore out of want, therefore out of suffering. No attained object of will can give permanent satisfaction. Thus, there can be no durable happiness or rest for us as long as we are subjects of will. ‘The Subject of Will lies continually on the turning wheel of Ixion, draws ever in the sieve of the Danaides, is the eternally thirsting Tantalus. But in the moment of pure objective contemplation, free from all interest of the particular subjectivity, we enter a painless state: the wheel of Ixion stands still. The Flemish painters produce this æsthetic effect by the sense of disinterested contemplation conveyed in their treatment of insignificant objects. There are certain natural scenes that have power in themselves, apart from artistic treatment, to put us in

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this state; but the slightest obtrusion of individual interest destroys the magic. Past and distant objects, through their apparent detachment, have the same power. The essential thing æsthetically, whether we contemplate the present or the past, the near or the distant, is that only the world of presentation remains; the world as will has vanished.

The difference between the feelings of the Beautiful and of the Sublime is this. In the feeling of the beautiful, pure intelligence gains the victory without a struggle, leaving in consciousness only the pure subject of knowledge, so that no reminiscence of the will remains. In the feeling of the sublime, on the other hand, the state of pure intelligence has to be won by a conscious breaking loose from relations in the object that suggest something threatening to the will; though there must not be actual danger; for in that case the individual will itself would come into play, and æsthetic detachment would cease. Elevation above the sense of terror has not only to be consciously won but consciously maintained, and involves a continuous reminiscence, not indeed of any individual will, but of the will of man in general, so far as it is expressed through its objectivity, the human body, confronted by forces

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hostile to it. Pre-eminently this feeling arises from contrast between the immensities of space and time and the apparent insignificance of man. It means in the last resort that the beholder is upheld by the consciousness that as pure subject of knowledge (not as individual subject) he himself bears within him all the worlds and all the ages, and is eternal as the forces that vainly seem to threaten him with annihilation.

On the objective side, and apart from the subjective distinction just set forth, the sublime and the beautiful are not essentially different. In both cases alike, the object of æsthetic contemplation is not the single thing, but the Idea that is striving towards manifestation in it. Whatever is viewed æsthetically is viewed out of relation to time and space: ‘along with the law of sufficient reason the single thing and the knowing individual are taken away, and nothing remains over but the Idea and the pure Subject of Knowledge, which together make up the adequate objectivity of the Will at this stage.’ There is thus a sense in which everything is beautiful; since the Will appears in everything at some stage of objectivity, and this means that it is the expression of some Idea. But one thing can be more beautiful than another by facilitating æsthetic contemplation.

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This facilitation proceeds either from the greater clearness and perfection with which the particular thing shows forth the Idea of its kind, or from the higher stage of objectivation to which that Idea corresponds. Man being the highest stage of objectivation of the Will, the revelation of his essence is the highest aim of art. In æsthetic contemplation of inorganic nature and vegetative life, whether in the reality or through the medium of art, and in appreciation of architecture, the subjective aspect, that is to say, the enjoyment of pure will-less knowledge, is predominant; the Ideas themselves being here lower stages of objectivity. On the other hand, when animals and men are the object of æsthetic contemplation or representation, the enjoyment consists more in the objective apprehension of those Ideas in which the essence of the Will is most clearly and fully manifested.

Of all Schopenhauer's work, its æsthetic part has met with the most general appreciation. Here especially he abounds in observations drawn directly, in his own phrase, from intuition. To make a selection of these, however, is not appropriate to a brief sketch like the present. I pass on, therefore, to those portions of his theory of Art by which he makes the transition, in terms of his system, to Morality.

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From Architecture onward the arts are obliged to represent the Will as divided. Here, at the first stage, its division subsists only in a conflict of inorganic forces which have to be brought to equilibrium. The conflict between weight and rigidity is in truth the only æsthetic material of architecture as a fine art. When we come to animal and lastly to human life, which, in the Plastic Arts and in Poetry, as form, individualised expression, and action, is the highest object of æsthetic representation, the vehemence of divided will is fully revealed; and here too is revealed the essential identity of every will with our own. In the words of the Indian wisdom, ‘*Tat twam asi*’; ‘that thou art.’ Under the head of Ethics it will be shown expressly that by this insight, when it reacts on the will, the will can deny itself. For the temporary release from its striving, given in æsthetic contemplation, is then substituted permanent release. To this ‘resignation,’ the innermost essence of all virtue and holiness, and the final redemption from the world, Art itself, at its highest stages, points the way.

The summits of pictorial and poetic art Schopenhauer finds in the great Italian painters so far as they represent the ethical spirit of Christianity, and in the tragic poets, ancient and modern. It

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is true that the poverty of their sacred history or mythology puts the Christian artists at a disadvantage; but events are merely the accidents of their art. Not in these, as related according to the law of sufficient reason, is the essence, but in the spirit we divine through the forms portrayed. In their representation of men full of that spirit, and especially in the eyes, we see mirrored the knowledge that has seized the whole essence of the world and of life, and that has reacted on the will, not so as to give it motives, but as a 'quietive'; whence proceeds complete resignation, and with it the annulling of the will and of the whole essence of this world. Of tragedy, the subject-matter is the conflict of the will with itself at its highest stage of objectivity. Here also the end is the resignation brought on by complete knowledge of the essence of the world. The hero, on whom at last this knowledge has acted as a quietive, gives up, not merely life, but the whole will to live. 'The true meaning of tragedy is the deeper insight, that what the hero expiates is not his particular sins, but original sin, that is, the guilt of existence itself.' To illustrate this position Schopenhauer is fond of quoting a passage from Calderon which declares that the greatest sin of man is to have been born.

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It seems strange that, after deriding as he does the popular notion of 'poetic justice,' so detached a thinker should imagine an at least equally one-sided view to receive its final confirmation from the Spanish dramatist's poetic phrasing of a Christian dogma. The great tragic poets, for Schopenhauer also, are *Aeschylus*, *Sophocles* and *Shakespeare*. Now it is safe to say that by none of these was any such general doctrine held either in conceptual or in intuitive form. The whole effect of any kind of art, of course he would admit, cannot be packed into a formula; but if we seek one as an aid to understanding, some adaptation of his own theory of the sublime would probably serve much better as applied to tragedy than his direct theory of the drama. In the case of pictorial art, all that is proved by what he says about the representation of ascetic saintliness, is that this, like many other things, can be so brought within the scope of art as to make us momentarily identify ourselves with its Idea in the impersonal manner he has himself described. His purely æsthetic theory is quite adequate to the case, without any assumption that this is the representation of what is best. Art, pictorial or poetic, can no more prove pessimism than optimism. We pick out expressions of one or the

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other for quotation according to our moods or subjective preferences ; but, if we have the feeling for art itself, our sense of actual æsthetic value ought to be independent of these.

Schopenhauer's æsthetic theory, however, does not end here. There follows the part of it by which he has had an influence on artists themselves. For him, a position separate from all the other arts is held by music. While the rest objectify the Will mediately, that is to say, by means of the Ideas, Music is as immediate an objectivation of the whole Will as the world itself, or as the Ideas, of which the pluralised phenomenon constitutes the sum of particular things. The other arts speak of the shadow, music of the substance. There is indeed a parallelism, an analogy, between Music and the Ideas ; yet Music never expresses the phenomenon in which these are manifested, but only the inner essence behind the appearance, the Will itself. In a sense it renders not feeling in its particularity, but feeling *in abstracto* ; joy, sorrow, not a joy, a sorrow. The phenomenal world and music are to be regarded as two different expressions of the same thing. The world might be called embodied Music as well as embodied Will. ‘ Melodies are to a certain extent like general concepts, an abstract of reality.’

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A complete explanation of music, that is, a detailed repetition of it in concepts, were this possible, would be a complete explanation of the world (since both express the same thing) and therefore a true and final philosophy. As music only reaches its perfection in the full harmony, 'so the one Will out of time finds its perfect objectivation only in complete union of all the stages which in innumerable degrees of heightened distinctness reveal its essence.' But here, too, Schopenhauer adds, the Will is felt, and can be proved, to be a divided will; and the deliverance wrought by this supreme art, as by all the others, is only temporary.

## CHAPTER V

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PERMANENT redemption from the suffering of the world is to be found only in the holiness of the ascetic ; but to this there are many stages, constituting the generally accepted human virtues. Of these Schopenhauer has a rational account to give in terms of his philosophy ; and if the last stage does not seem to follow by logical sequence from the others, this is only what is to be expected ; for it is reached, in his view, by a sort of miracle. To the highest kind of intuitive knowledge, from which the ascetic denial of the will proceeds, artistic contemplation ought to prepare the way ; and so also, on his principles, ought the practice of justice and goodness. Yet he is obliged to admit that few thus reach the goal. Of those that do reach it, the most arrive through personal suffering, which may be deserved. A true miracle is often worked in the repentant criminal, by which final deliverance is achieved.

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Though the 'intelligible character' is unalterable, and the empirical character can only be the unfolding of this, as every great dramatist intuitively recognises, yet the 'convertites,' like Duke Frederick in *As You Like It*, are not to be regarded as hypocrites. The 'second voyage' to the harbour, that of the disappointed egoist, on condition of this miracle, brings the passenger to it as surely as the first, that of the true saints, which is only for the few. And in these equally a miraculous conversion of the will has to be finally worked.

At the entrance to his distinctive theory of ethics, Schopenhauer places a restatement of his metaphysics as the possible basis of a mode of contemplating life which, he admits, has some community with an optimistic pantheism. The Will, through the presentation and the accompanying intelligence developed in its service, becomes conscious that that which it wills is precisely the world, life as it is. To call it 'the will to live' is therefore a pleonasm. 'Will' and 'will to live' are equivalent. For this will, life is everlastingly a certainty. 'Neither the will, the thing-in-itself in all phenomena, nor the subject of knowledge, the spectator of all phenomena, is ever touched by birth and death.' It is true that the

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individual appears and disappears; but individuality is illusory. Past and future exist only in conceptual thought. ‘The form of life is a present without end, howsoever the individuals, phenomena of the Idea, come into existence and vanish in time, like fugitive dreams.’ Only as phenomenon is each man different from the other things of the world: as thing-in-itself he is the Will, which appears in all, and death takes away the illusion that divides his consciousness from the rest. ‘Death is a sleep in which the individuality is forgotten: everything else wakes again, or rather has remained awake.’ It is, in the expression adopted by Schopenhauer later, an awakening from the dream of life: though this bears with it somewhat different implications; and, as has been said, his theory of individuality became modified.

With the doctrine of the eternal life of the Will are connected Schopenhauer’s theories, developed later, of the immortality of the species and of individualised sexual love. The latter is by itself a remarkable achievement, and constitutes the one distinctly new development brought to completion in his later years; for the modifications in his theory of individuality are only tentative. His theory of love has a deter-

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minate conclusion, of great value for science, and not really compatible, it seems to me, with his pessimism. In its relation to ethics, on which he insisted, it is rightly placed in the position it occupies, between the generalised statement of his metaphysics just now set forth on the one side, and his theory of human virtue on the other.

The teleology that manifests itself in individualised love is, in his view, not related in reality to the interests of the individual life, but to those of the species. That this is immortal follows from the eternity of the Idea it unfolds.<sup>1</sup> The end sought is aimed at unconsciously by the person. Fundamentally, for Schopenhauer, teleology must of course be unconscious, since the will is blind, and will, not intelligence, is primordial. Its typical case is the instinct of animals; but the 'instinctive' character belongs also to the accomplishment of the highest aims, as in art and virtue. What characterises individualised love internally is the aim, attributed to 'nature' or 'the species,' at a certain typical beauty or per-

<sup>1</sup> The disappearance of species in time raises difficulties in more than one way for his philosophy; but he formally escapes refutation by the suggestion, already noted, that the Idea need not always be manifested phenomenally in the same world. This, however, he did not work out.

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fection of the offspring. The lover is therefore deluded in thinking that he is seeking his own happiness. What looks through the eyes of lovers is the genius of the race, meditating on the composition of the next generation. It may, in the complexity of circumstances, be thwarted. When it reaches its end, often personal happiness is sacrificed. Marriages dictated by interest tend to be happier than love-matches. Yet, though the sacrifice of the individual to the race is involuntary in these, egoism is after all overcome; hence they are quite rightly the object of a certain admiration and sympathy, while the prudential ones are looked upon with a tinge of contempt. For here too that element appears which alone gives nobility to the life either of intellect or of art or of moral virtue, namely, the rising above a subjective interest of the individual will.

No doubt there are touches of pessimism in this statement; but the general theory does not seem reconcilable finally with pessimism as Schopenhauer understands it. For it is a definitely stated position of his that nature keeps up the process of the world by yielding just enough to prevent discontinuance of the striving for an illusory end. Yet he admits here in the result

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something beyond bare continuance of life; for this is already secured without the particular modification of feeling described. What the feeling is brought in to secure is a better realisation of the type in actual individuals; and such realisation is certainly more than bare subsistence with the least possible expenditure of nature's resources.

As the immediate preliminary to his ethics proper, Schopenhauer restates his doctrine on the intelligible and the empirical character in man, and lays down a generalised psychological position regarding the suffering inherent in life. Everything as phenomenon, we have seen already, is determined because it is subject to the law of sufficient reason. On the other hand, everything as thing-in-itself is free; for 'freedom' means only non-subjection to that law. The intelligible character of each man is an indivisible, unalterable act of will out of time; the developed and explicit phenomenon of this in time and space is the empirical character. Man is his own work, not in the light of knowledge, but before all knowledge; this is secondary and an instrument. Ultimately, freedom is a mystery, and takes us beyond even will as the name for the thing-in-itself. In reality, that which is 'will to live' need

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not have been such (though we cannot see how this is so), but has become such from itself and from nothing else. This is its '*aseitas*.' Hence it is in its power to deny itself as will to live. When it does this, the redemption (like the fall) comes from itself. This denial does not mean annihilation, except relatively to all that we know under the forms of our understanding. For the will, though the nearest we can get to the thing-in-itself, is in truth a partially phenomenalised expression of this. As the will to live expresses itself phenomenally, so also does the denial of the will to live, when this, by special '*grace*,' is achieved. Only in man does the freedom thus attained find phenomenal expression. That man can attain to it proves that in him the will has reached its highest possible stage of objectivation; for, after it has turned back and denied itself, there is evidently nothing more that we can call existence, that is to say, phenomenal existence, beyond. What there is beyond in the truth of being is something that the mystics know—or rather, possess, for it is beyond knowledge—but cannot communicate.

The psychological reason that can be assigned for the ascetic flight from the world is that all pleasure, happiness, satisfaction, is merely nega-

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tive. The will is a striving that has no ultimate aim. It is sustained only by hindrances. Hindrance means suffering; and every satisfaction attained is only temporary, a mere liberation from need, want, pain, which is positive. Suffering increases with the degree of consciousness. The life of civilised man is an alternation between pain and *ennui*, which can itself become as intolerable a suffering as anything. The problem of moral philosophy, then, is ultimately how redemption from such a world is to be attained, but only so far as this is a matter of conceptual knowledge. For philosophy, being from beginning to end theoretical, cannot work the practical miracle by which the will denies itself.

The intuitive, as distinguished from merely conceptual, knowledge by which the return is made, consists essentially in a clear insight into the identity of the suffering will in all things and the necessity of its suffering as long as it is will to live. This, then, is the true foundation of morality. The universe as metaphysical thing-in-itself, as noumenon, has an ethical meaning. All its stages of objectivation, though in the process what seems to be aimed at is preservation of the will as manifested, have in truth for their ultimate aim its redemption by suppression of

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the phenomenal world in which it manifests itself.

Affirmation of the will is affirmation of the body, which is the objectivity of the will. The sexual impulse, since it affirms life beyond the death of the individual, is the strongest of self-affirmations. In it is found the meaning of the mythical representation that has taken shape in the theological dogma of original sin. For by this affirmation going beyond the individual body, suffering and death, as the necessary accompaniment of the phenomenon of life, are reaffirmed, and the possibility of redemption this time declared fruitless. But through the whole process there runs eternal justice. The justification of suffering is that the will affirms itself; and the self-affirmation is justified by payment of the penalty.

Before the final redemption—which is not for the world but for the individual—there are many stages of ethical progress. These consist in the gradual overcoming of egoism by sympathy. And here Schopenhauer proceeds to set forth a practical scheme for the social life of man, differing from ordinary utilitarianism only by reducing all sympathy to pity, in accordance with his view that there can be no such thing as positive happiness.

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He begins with a theory of justice, legal and moral, very much on the lines of Hobbes, except that he regards it as up to a certain point *a priori*. Here he is consistent throughout. As in his philosophical account of mathematics and physics, so also in his aesthetics and ethics, he retained, side by side with a strong empirical tendency, belief in certain irreducible *a priori* forms without which our knowledge cannot be constituted. The pure ethical theory of justice, he says, bears to the political theory the relation of pure to applied mathematics. Injustice he holds to be the positive conception. It means the breaking into the sphere of another person's will to live. The self-affirmation of the will that appears in one individual body is extended to denial of the will that appears in other bodies. Justice consists in non-encroachment. There is a 'natural right,' or 'moral right,' of resistance to injustice by infliction of what, apart from the attempted encroachment, would be wrong. Either force or deception may be used; as either may be the instrument of injustice. The purely ethical doctrine of justice applies only to action; since only the not doing of injustice depends on us. With the State and its laws, the relation is reversed. The object of these is to prevent the suffering of

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injustice. The State is not directed against egoism, but has sprung out of a rationalised collective egoism. It has for its purpose only to avoid the inconvenient consequences of individual aggressions on others. Outside of the State, there is a right of self-defence against injustice, but no right of punishment. The punishment threatened by the State is essentially a motive against committing wrong, intended to supply the place of ethical motives for those who are insufficiently accessible to them. Actual infliction of it is the carrying out of the threat when it has failed, so that in general the expectation of the penalty may be certain. Revenge, which has a view to the past, cannot be justified ethically : punishment is directed only to the future. There is no right in any one to set himself up as a moral judge and inflict pain ; but man has a right to do what is needful for social security. The criminal's acts are of course necessitated ; but he cannot justly complain of being punished for them, since it is ultimately from himself, from what he is, that they sprang.

With the doctrine of 'eternal justice,' touched on above, we pass into a different region of thought. What is responsible for the guilt in the world is the Will by which everything exists,

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and the suffering everlastingly falls where the guilt is. Take the case of apparently unpunished injustice (from the human point of view) expressing itself in the extreme form of deliberate cruelty. Through this also, eternal justice, from which there is no escape, is fulfilled. ‘The torturer and the tortured are one. The former errs in thinking he has no share in the torture; the latter in thinking he has no share in the guilt.’ For all the pain of the world is the expiation of the sin involved in the self-affirmation of will, and the Will as thing-in-itself is one and the same in all.

If this could satisfy any one, there would be no need to go further. The whole being as it ought to be, why try to rectify details that are absolutely indifferent? But of course the implication is that individuality is simply illusory; and this, as has been said, was a position that Schopenhauer neither could nor did consistently maintain. Indeed, immediately after setting forth this theory of ‘eternal justice,’ he goes on to a relative justification of those acts of disinterested vengeance by which a person knowingly sacrifices his own life for the sake of retribution on some extraordinary criminal. This, he says, is a form of punishment, not mere revenge, although it involves an error concerning the nature of eternal

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justice. Suicide involves a similar error, in so far as it supposes that the real being of the individual can be assailed through its phenomenal manifestation. It is not a denial of the will to live, but a strong affirmation of it, only not in the given circumstances: different circumstances are desired with such intensity that the present cannot be borne. Therefore the individual manifestation of the will is not suppressed. Yet, one might reply, if individuality is an illusion attached to the appearance in time and space of a particular organism, it would seem that, with the disappearance of this, all that distinguishes the individual must disappear also.

Schopenhauer had no will thus to escape from life; nor did he afterwards devote himself to expounding further his theory of eternal justice. What he wrote later, either positively or as mere speculation, implies both greater reality in the individual and more of cosmic equity to correspond. His next step, even at his first stage, is to continue the exposition of a practicable ethics for human life. His procedure consists in adding beneficence to justice, with the proviso already mentioned, which is required by his psychology, that all beneficence can consist only in the relief of pain. For Schopenhauer, as for Comte, what

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is to be overcome is 'egoism,' an excessive degree of which is the mark of the character we call 'bad.' The 'good' is what Comte and Spencer call the 'altruistic' character. This difference between characters Schopenhauer goes on to explain in terms of his metaphysics. The egoist is so deluded by the principle of individuation that he supposes an absolute cleft between his own person and all others. The remorse of conscience from which he suffers proceeds in part from an obscure perception that the principle of individuation is illusory. Genuine virtue springs out of the intuitive (not merely abstract) knowledge that recognises in another individuality the same essence as in one's own. The characteristic of the good man is that he makes less difference than is customary between himself and others. Justice is an intermediate stage between the encroaching egoism of the bad and positive goodness. In the renunciation of rights of property, and provision for all personal needs without aid from others, practised by some religious and philosophical ascetics, it is passing over into something more. There is, however, a certain misunderstanding involved in so interpreting strict justice; for there are many ways in which the rich and powerful can be positively

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beneficent. At the other extreme, when they simply live on their inherited wealth, without doing anything in return, their mode of life is morally, though not legally, unjust. Rights of property Schopenhauer derived from labour spent on the things appropriated. The injustice, in many ways, of the present social order he quite recognises. If he has no sympathy with revolutions, it is because he has no belief in the realisation of an ideal state. This follows from his view of history. Human life, it is his conviction, never has been and never will be different as a whole. Redemption from evil can be attained only by the individual. All that the State can do is to provide certain very general conditions of security under which there will be no hindrance to those who desire to live in accordance with a moral ideal.

Yet there are qualifications to make. Many passages in Schopenhauer's writings prove his firm belief in the future triumph of reason over superstition. It is to the honour of humanity, he says, that so detestable a form of evil as organised religious persecution has appeared only in one section of history. And, in his own personal case, he has the most complete confidence that the truths he has put forth

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cannot fail sometime to gain a hearing. In all cases, error is only temporary, and truth will prevail. His language on this subject, and indeed often on others, is indistinguishable from that of an optimist.

In the last resort, his pessimism entrenches itself behind the psychological proposition that every satisfaction is negative, being only the removal of a pain. If this is unsustainable, there is nothing finally in his Metaphysics of Will to necessitate the pessimistic conclusion drawn. The mode of deduction by which he proceeds is to argue first to the position already noticed : that all that love of others on which morality is based is fundamentally pity. True benevolence can only be the desire to relieve others' pain, springing from the identification of this with our own. For that reason, moral virtue must finally pass over into asceticism—the denial of the will to live. In others, if we are able to see through the principle of individuation, we recognise the same essence as in ourselves, and we perceive that as long as this wills it must necessarily suffer. The end then is to destroy the will to live. This is to be done by *askesis*, self-mortification. The first step is complete chastity. If, says Schopenhauer, the highest phenomenon

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of will, that is, man, were to disappear through a general refusal to affirm life beyond the individual body, man's weaker reflexion in the animal world would disappear also, and the consciousness of the whole would cease. Knowledge being taken away, the rest would vanish into nothingness, since there is 'no object without subject.' That this will come to pass, however, he certainly did not believe. He has no cosmogony, like that of Hartmann, ending in a general redemption of the universe by such a collective act. Nor did he hold, like his later successor Mainländer, that through the conflict and gradual extinction of individualities, 'this great world shall so wear out to nought.' The world for him is without beginning and without end. But the exceptional individual can redeem himself. What he does when he has reached the height of holiness is by voluntary poverty and all other privations, inflicted for their own sake, to break and kill the will, which he recognises as the source of his own and of the world's suffering existence. In his case not merely the phenomenon ends at death, as with others, but the being is taken away. To be a 'world-overcomer' in this sense (as opposed to a 'world-conqueror') is the essence of sanctity when cleared of all the

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superstitious dogmas by which the saints try to explain their mode of life to themselves.

The absolutely pure expression of this truth is to be found only in philosophy; but of the religions Buddhism comes nearest to expressing it without admixture. For the Buddhist saint asks aid from no god. True Christianity, however,—the Christianity of the New Testament and of the Christian mystics,—agrees both with Buddhism and with Brahmanism in ultimate aim. What spoils it for Schopenhauer is the Judaic element. This, on one side, infects it with the optimism of the Biblical story of creation, in which God ‘saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.’ On the other side, it contaminates the myth of original sin, which bears in itself a profound philosophical truth, by this same doctrine of a creative God; from which follows all the injustice and irrationality necessarily involved in the Augustinian theology, and not to be expelled except with its theism. Nevertheless, the story of the Fall of Man, of which that theology, in its fundamentally true part, is a reasoned expression, is the one thing, Schopenhauer avows, that reconciles him to the Old Testament. The truth that it clothes he finds also among the Greeks; Empedocles,

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after the Orphics and Pythagoreans, having taught that the soul had been doomed to wander because of some antenatal sin. And the mysticism that accompanies all these more or less pure expressions of one metaphysical truth he finds represented by the Sufis even in optimistic Islam; so that he can claim for his philosophy a world-wide consent.

Religion, if we take this to include mysticism, at once rises above philosophy and falls below it. As 'metaphysics of the people,' it is a mythological expression of philosophical truth: as mysticism, it is a kind of 'epi-philosophy.' Beyond pure philosophy Schopenhauer does not profess to go; but he accepts what the mystics say as the description of a positive experience which becomes accessible when supreme insight is attained intuitively. For the philosopher as such, insight into that which is beyond the forms of our knowledge and even beyond the will itself, remains only conceptual; though it is within the province of philosophy to mark out the place for this. The 'something else' that is left when the will has been denied, is indicated by the 'ecstasy,' 'illumination,' 'union with God,' spoken of by the mystics. Paradoxically, some of the mystics themselves even have identified it with 'nothing';

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but the result of the denial of the will to live is to be called nothing only in relation to the world as we know it. ‘On the other hand, to those in whom the will has turned back and denied itself, this so very real world of ours with all its suns and milky ways is—nothing.’

In this terminus of his philosophy, Schopenhauer recognised his kinship with Indian thought, of which he was a lifelong student. To call his doctrine a kind of Buddhism is, however, in some ways a misapprehension. Undoubtedly he accepts as his ideal the ethical attitude that he finds to be common to Buddhism and the Christianity of the New Testament; but metaphysical differences mark him off from both. We have seen that he rejects the extra-mundane God of Semitic derivation, adopted by historical Christianity. Indeed he is one of the most pronounced anti-Jehovists of all literature. But equally his belief in a positive metaphysical doctrine marks him off from Buddhism, according to the account given of it by its most recent students, who regard it either as ultimately nihilistic or as having no metaphysics at all, but only a psychology and ethics. Nor can he be precisely identified with the Vedantists of orthodox Hinduism. Their ultimate reality, if we are to find an analogue for it in European

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metaphysics, seems to resemble the hypostasised *ego* of Fichte, or the Kantian ‘transcendental unity of apperception,’ much more than it resembles Schopenhauer’s blindly striving will as thing-in-itself. Even in practical ethics, he does not follow the Indian systems at all closely. Philosophical doctrines of justice are of course purely European; and Schopenhauer himself points out the sources of his own theory. In his extension of ethics to animals, on which he lays much stress, he cites the teachings of Eastern non-Semitic religions as superior to the rest; but he does not follow the Indians, nor even the Pythagoreans, so far as to make abstinence from flesh part of the ideal. He condemns vivisection on the ground that animals have rights: certain ways of treating them are unjust, not simply uncompassionate. The discussion here again is of course wholly within European thought. Thus, in trying to determine his significance for modern philosophy, we may consider his system in its immediate environment, leaving it to more special students to determine how far it received a peculiar colouring from the Oriental philosophies, of which, in his time, the more exact knowledge was just beginning to penetrate to the West.

## CHAPTER VI

### HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

SCHOPENHAUER is not one of the philosophers who have founded a school, though he has had many disciples and enthusiastic admirers. The pessimism that was for a time a watchword with certain literary groups has passed as a mode, and his true significance must be sought elsewhere. Of the thinkers who have followed him in his pessimism, two indeed stand out as the architects of distinct systems, Eduard von Hartmann and Philipp Mainländer (both already incidentally referred to); but while they are to be classed unquestionably as philosophers, their systems contain an element that their master would have regarded as mythological. Schopenhauer declared as clearly as any of the Greeks that the phenomenal world is without beginning and without end. Kant's positing of an 'antinomy' on this point he regarded as wholly without rational justification. What Kant calls the 'antithesis,' namely, the

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infinite series, can be logically proved for phenomena. The 'thesis,' which asserts a beginning in time, is defended by mere fallacies. Now Hartmann and Mainländer both hold, though in different fashions, that there is a world-process from a beginning to an end, namely, the extinction of consciousness. This is the redemption of the world. Their affinity, therefore, seems to be with the Christian Gnostics rather than with the pure philosophers of the Greek tradition, continued in modern times by Bruno, Spinoza, and Schopenhauer.

Whatever may be thought of the pessimism by which Schopenhauer's mood is distinguished from that of his precursors, few will fail to recognise that special doctrines of his system contain at least a large portion of truth. His theories of Art, of Genius, and of Love are enough to found an enduring reputation for any thinker, even if there were nothing else of value in his writings. But there is much else, both in systematic construction and in the illumination of detail. I have been inclined to put forward first of all the translation into idealistic terms of the universal sentiency held by the Ionian thinkers to be inherent in the primordial elements of nature. While they viewed the world as an objective

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thing having psychological qualities, Schopenhauer, after the long intermediate process of thought, could treat it as phenomenal object with a psychological or subjective essence. For both doctrines alike, however, mind or soul is immanent. Still, it must be allowed that a difference remains by which Schopenhauer was even more remote than they were from the later Greek idealism. As they were not materialists, so they did not exclude reason from the psychical properties of their substances. Schopenhauer, while he rejected the materialism of their ancient and modern successors alike, took the step of formally derationalising the elements of mind. This, no doubt, is unsustainable ultimately, if reason is ever to emerge from them. Yet the one-sidedness of the position has had a peculiar value in combating an equally one-sided rationalistic idealism. This is recognised by clear-sighted opponents. And Schopenhauer's calling the non-rational or anti-rational element in the world 'will' helps to make plainer the real problem of evil. There is truth in the Hegelian paradox that 'pessimism is an excellent basis for optimism.' An optimist like Plotinus saw that, even if good comes of evil, the case of the optimist must fail unless evil can be shown to be a necessary con-

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stituent of the world. The Platonic and Neo-Platonic 'matter,' a principle of diremption or individuation, like time and space for Schopenhauer, was an attempt to solve this problem; but something more positive seemed to be needed as the source of the stronger manifestations of evil. To the strength of these Plato drew attention in a passage (*Republic*, x. 610<sup>1</sup>) where it is acknowledged that injustice confers a character of vitality and sleeplessness upon its possessor. In the notion of a blind and vehement striving, Schopenhauer supplies something adequate; only, to maintain a rational optimism, it must be regarded as a necessary element in a mixture, not as the spring of the whole.

Much might be said on the teleology by which he tries to educe intelligence from the primordial strife. Against his view, that it is evolved as a mere instrument for preserving races in a struggle, another may be set that is ready to hand in a dialogue of Plutarch.<sup>2</sup> The struggle among animals, it is there incidentally argued, has for its end to sharpen their intelligence. Both these theories are on the surface compatible

<sup>1</sup> Cited in one of the introductory essays to Jowett and Campbell's edition, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> *De Sollertia Animalium*, 27.

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with evolution. If, leaving aside the problem of mechanism, we try to verify them by the test of results, the latter undoubtedly seems the more plausible. For if the struggle was a means to the improvement of intelligence, nature has succeeded more and more; whereas, if her intention was to preserve races, she has continually failed. This argument is at any rate perfectly valid against Schopenhauer himself; for he holds in common with the optimistic teleologists that 'nature does nothing in vain.'

I will conclude with a few detached criticisms on the ethical doctrine which he regarded as the culmination of his system. The antithesis, it may first be noted, between the temporary release from the vehemence of the will that is gained through art, and the permanent release through asceticism, is not consistently maintained. Schopenhauer admits that the knowledge which for the ascetic is the 'quietive' of the will has to be won anew in a perpetual conflict. 'No one can have enduring rest on earth.' Again, revision of his doctrine concerning the reality of the individual would, I think, necessitate revision also of the position that not only asceticism but 'all true and pure love, nay, even freely rendered justice, proceeds from seeing through the *principium*

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*individuationis.*' If the individual is in some sense ultimately real, then love must be to a certain extent literally altruism. We are brought down to the elementary fact, in terms of the metaphysics of ethics, that the object of love is a real being that is itself and not ourselves, though having some resemblance to us and united in a larger whole. An objection not merely verbal might indeed be taken to Schopenhauer's metaphysics of ethics strictly on his own ground. If it is purely and simply the essence of ourselves that we recognise in everything, does not this reduce all love finally to a well-understood egoism? The genuine fact of sympathy seems to escape his mode of formulation. And, in the end, we shall perhaps not find the ascetic to be the supreme ethical type. Of the self-tormenting kind of asceticism, it is not enough to say with Schopenhauer that, since it is a world-wide phenomenon of human nature, it calls for some account from philosophy. The account may be sufficiently rendered by historical psychology; the result being to class it as an aberration born of the illusions incident to a certain type of mind at a certain stage. Indeed, that seems to be the conclusion of the Buddhists, who claim to have transcended it by finding it superfluous for the end it aims at.

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Let us then take, as our example of the completed type, not the monks of the Thebaid, but the mild ascetics of the Buddhist communities. Does not this type, even in its most attractive form, represent a 'second best'? Is not the final judgment that of Plato, that to save oneself is something, but that there is no full achievement unless for the life of the State also the ideal has been brought nearer realisation? When there is nothing in the world but irredeemable tyranny or anarchy, flight from it may be the greatest success possible as far as the individual life is concerned; but this is not the normal condition of humanity. Finally, may not some actual achievement, either practical or, like that of Schopenhauer, speculative, even if accompanied by real imperfections of character, possess a higher human value than the sanctity that rests always in itself?

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